

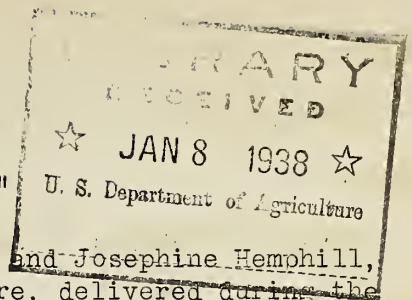
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

"Fireproofing Fabrics"



A radio conversation between Wallace Kadderly and Josephine Hemphill, Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture, delivered during the Department period of the National Farm and Home Hour Tuesday, December 28, 1937, and broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 70 associated radio stations.

--ooOoo--

ANNOUNCER:

And now I'm delighted to welcome back to the National Farm and Home Hour, Josephine Hemphill. The last time Miss Hemphill was up here in the studio, she told us all about tea. And then she went to London. Did you have a good time, Miss Hemphill?

HEMPHILL:

Oh yes -- I had a wonderful time, Mr. Rash.

ANNOUNCER:

Won't you tell us about it?

HEMPHILL:

Some time I will. But not today.

ANNOUNCER:

Why not?

HEMPHILL:

Because. If Mr. Salisbury hears me talk about -- Piccadilly Circus, when I'm supposed to be reporting news -- he might be perturbed.

ANNOUNCER:

Well, we certainly don't want to "perturb" Morse Salisbury. Not at this festive season, when he's on vacation. We'll get right to work. Miss Hemphill, you know Mr. Kadderly.

(Over)

HEMPHILL:

Indeed I do.

KADDERLY:

We're old friends, Mr. Rash.

HEMPHILL:

I'm mighty glad to see you again, Wallace. Have a nice Christmas?

KADDERLY:

I can't complain. See my new tie. That's one of my Christmas presents. How'd you like it, Jo.

HEMPHILL:

It's very becoming. Conservative -- yet sort of -- bright.

KADDERLY:

You don't think it's too bright!

HEMPHILL:

Oh no. Not at all. See this leaflet, Wallace? That's one of my gifts.

KADDERLY:

But look here, Jo. Why should Santa Claus send you a Government leaflet.

HEMPHILL:

He knew I needed it. Read the title.

KADDERLY:

"Fireproofing Fabrics." From the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils.

HEMPHILL:

Brand new -- just off the press.

KADDERLY:

Good-looking cover. Say, Mr. Clause should have kept this leaflet. He might need it himself sometime -- considering the work he's in.

HEMPHILL:

You mean coming down chimneys, in full dress?

KADDERLY:

Yes. It's a wonder to me the old gent's whiskers don't catch fire sometimes.

HEMPHILL:

Maybe they're fireproofed.

KADDERLY:

They just be. But tell us why he thought you'd want a leaflet like this for Christmas.

HEMPHILL:

Well, it's a long story. You see a long time ago I had a very sad experience with an iron, and an ironing board cover. I'd rather not go into detail.

KADDERLY:

You didn't - Don't tell me you had to call out the fire department.

HEMPHILL:

Yes sir, I did. The friend who was visiting me that day is now with the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. So, this Christmas she sent me two covers for my ironing board, and a copy of this new leaflet. Look here -- it's decorated with Christmas seals.

KADDERLY:

I noticed that. Has the Department begun putting holly and mistletoe on its publications?

HEMPHILL:

Oh no! These seals are stuck on the leaflet. And here's a note -- "See page 2."

KADDERLY:

What's on page 2?

HEMPHILL:

Here, Wallace, you read page 2.

KADDERLY:

So you want me to read it.

HEMPHILL:

If you don't mind. You have such a -- compelling -- voice.

KADDERLY:

All right. Your leaflet says, on page 2. "What materials should be fireproofed? Certain types of clothing, and such readily inflammable fabrics as curtains, rugs lying before open fireplaces or near living-room stoves, fabric panels used to hide the supply of wood or coal for the fireplace, fabric heat deflectors for stoves, draperies near flues or open fires, canvas fire-smothering blankets, ironing board covers." There's your ironing board cover.

HEMPHILL:

Read on. What else.

KADDERLY:

"Cloth pot-lifters, and Christmas tree ornaments." Jo, I just had a thought. Why couldn't you fireproof cotton gloves -- the kind you sometimes wear on a picnic -- or camping -- when you want to lift a hot potato out of the ashes, or turn a steak that's pretty close to the flames, or pick up a frying pan with a hot handle.

HEMPHILL:

Why, you could, Wallace. That's an excellent suggestion.

KADDERLY:

I think so myself. I'll try it sometime, and let you know how it works.

HEMPHILL:

I wish you'd do that.

KADDERLY:

Well, reading on, your leaflet states: "fireproofed loose cotton makes a very effective insulating material for use in building construction. Fireproofed sawdust also affords effective insulation when spread over the ceilings in unfinished attics, through which heat losses are ordinarily very great." Jo, I believe you've got something there.

HEMPHILL:

Well, I've just learned that farm fires take more than 3500 lives every year. Those who know say we can help reduce this loss, if we fireproof children's clothing, window curtains, draperies, and other inflammable household materials. Wallace, let me see the leaflet a minute.

KADDERLY:

Sure. Aren't you going to tell us how to fireproof these inflammable materials?

HEMPHILL:

That's just exactly what I'm going to do - as soon as I find the place . . . Here it is. Cotton materials catch fire more easily than wool and silk, so it's a little more important to fireproof the cotton. And, fortunately, the best fireproofing treatments are the simplest. All you do is dissolve the fireproofing substance in water, and then saturate your curtains, ironingboard covers, or whatever you're fireproofing. Some articles -- you can simply dip in the solution, and then squeeze them through a clothes wringer, or squeeze them by hand.

KADDERLY:

And then hang them up to dry?

HEMPHILL:

Yes -- hang them up to dry, just the way you'd dry the family washing.

KADDERLY:

But some things -- like heavy curtains -- Would you dip heavy curtains?

HEMPHILL:

No, I wouldn't. I'd spray them. With a common garden sprayer. You can use the sprayer on rag rugs, too, and carpets, and loose cotton and sawdust. If you're fireproofing these things -- rugs and carpets for instance, just hang them up, and then spray them with the fireproofing solution.

KADDERLY:

I remember one time when our kitchen curtains caught fire. I suppose if they'd been foreproofed -- How would you fireproof kitchen curtains.

HEMPHILL:

Why, I'd sprinkle them with the fireproofing solution, before ironing. Dampen the curtains a little wetter than you would ordinarily, and iron them, when they're nearly dry.

KADDERLY:

With a hot iron?

HEMPHILL:

No -- use an iron that's only moderately hot. If the iron's too hot -- or if the curtains are too damp -- the salts will crystallize on the iron.

KADDERLY:

I see.

HEMPHILL:

If this happens, disconnect the iron, let it cool somewhat, and then wipe off the deposit with a hot, wet cloth.

KADDERLY:

Now let's have your secret formula, for fireproofing curtains.

HEMPHILL:

Oh, it's no secret. This leaflet gives four different formulas. The first one includes borax, boric acid, and hot water. This one's most highly recommended. It fireproofs fabrics -- and it also makes them last longer.

KADDERLY:

Well, now, will you tell us how much borax, and how much boric acid?

HEMPHILL:

Certainly. Borax, seven ounces; boric acid, three ounces; hot water, two quarts.

KADDERLY:

Borax, seven ounces; boric acid, three ounces; hot water, two quarts.

HEMPHILL:

Correct. If you use powdered boric acid, make it into a paste, with a little of the hot water. It will dissolve more easily.

KADDERLY:

Well, that sounds simple, and practical. Now what are some of the other formulas, for fireproofing fabrics.

HEMPHILL:

The second one is ammonium sulphate and water. Ammonium sulphate, one pound, nine and one-half ounces; water, one gallon.

KADDERLY:

What kind of ammonium sulphate. Can you use a fertilizer-grade?

HEMPHILL:

Just a minute. . . . Yes, you can use a fertilizer-grade, if you strain

the solution, to get out the dirt. Let me read this: "It is further recommended" -- that is, if you use fertilizer-grade ammonium sulphate -- "it is further recommended that you use just enough household ammonia to give a distinctly -- a distinctly -- "

KADDERLY:

We're waiting. A distinctly -- what.

HEMPHILL:

A distinctly ammoni-- am-mon-nye-ack-al odor..

KADDERLY:

What a word!

HEMPHILL:

I don't think I'll read any more. After all, people interested in fireproofing children's clothes, and rugs that children play on before the fireplace, and ironing board covers, and kitchen curtains -- people would rather send for the leaflet, than hear me read from it.

KADDERLY:

Jo, you wouldn't let a word like -- am-mon-nye-ack-al -- stop you.

HEMPHILL:

Wallace, look at the cute children, on the cover of this leaflet.

KADDERLY:

Pretty close to the fireplace, aren't they.

HEMPHILL:

Yes, they are.

KADDERLY:

But I suppose they're sitting on a fireproofed rug.

HEMPHILL:

Absolutely. And they're dressed in fireproofed clothes. Wallace, would you like to announce the number of this leaflet -- Farmers' Bulletin, rather.

KADDERLY:

Farm and Home friends, the number of this new bulletin is 1736 -- and I can see that it contains much more information than Miss Hemphill

reported today, before she met up with that word am -- with that word.
How about the supply, Jo?

HEMPHILL:

There's a good supply. I checked on that before I came up.

KADDERLY:

Fine. Then anybody who's interested in this sort of fireproofing may have a copy of Farmers' Bulletin 1786, "Fireproofing Fabrics." Send your name and address to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and ask for Farmers' Bulletin 1786, "Fireproofing Fabrics."

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